

Milton Keynes and Bletchley Rail User Group

Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday 3 October 2006

Present: Louise Green, Alan Francis, Andrew Fisher, Sean Hickey, Paul Bryan (Silverlink Trains), Stuart Nightingale, Peter J Smith, Chris Wright (OBRAC)

Apologies: Andrew Couldrake, Virgin Trains

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

2. Matters Arising

- Paul Bryan will take up the issue of overheated carriages in the sidings, in the Spring.
- Paul Bryan confirmed that the poster is now with HQ but it is proving difficult to get a response. He stated that he is happy to display small posters in the ticket office windows and on the queue barriers.

3. Update from Silverlink Train Services

Paul Bryan reported that the performance figures are still extremely good. He confirmed that National Express have not been shortlisted for the franchise. An announcement regarding the new franchise is due to be made just before the Summer recess of parliament next year. The new franchise will commence in November 2007 and last for around 7 years.

Paul wished to voice his thanks to all commuters for their patience during the Robbie Williams' concerts. He confirmed that they had gone extremely well. Those present at the meeting also stated how impressed they had been with the organisation by Silverlink and it was suggested that the group write to Silverlink to voice their appreciation. Louise Green will do this. **Action: LG**

Paul also informed the Committee that the lift replacement work is currently ahead of schedule.

Alan Francis reported that he had attended a meeting about the Station Square development which had suggested that although there was no long term solution, an interim solution may be close to fruition. Alan and others at the meeting had suggested that any work on Station Square be undertaken at the same time as the work on the new platforms, to minimise disruption.

Paul Bryan mentioned that he had concerns regarding the 6 track work at Milton Keynes. Plans currently with the Local Authority for consideration show that there are to be no toilet facilities on Platforms 1, 2, 5, and 6, either for able-bodied or disabled customers. There are also no facilities on the concourse. He also mentioned that Network Rail is not prepared to tactile platforms 3 and 4 when the new platform work is being undertaken. The Committee agreed that this is not acceptable and could cause considerable risk and discomfort to passengers, particularly disabled rail users. It was agreed that a letter should be written to the Local Authority lodging a complaint about the lack of toilet facilities. Alan Francis agreed to do this. **Action: AF** It was suggested that the complaint regarding tactile should be sent, in the first instance, to Paul Bryan at Silverlink. He can then take this forward. Louise Green agreed to do this. **Action: LG**

4. Update from Virgin Train Services

There was no one present from Virgin Train Services. Paul Bryan explained that staff were currently on a course but that Keeley Eaton had now returned from maternity leave and would probably be attending future meetings.

5. EMail from Matthew Korris

Louise Green circulated a copy of an email she had received from Matt Korris, Parliamentary Assistant to Dr Starkey. Dr Starkey is due to meet with Tom Harris, the new minister for railways at the DfT, and invited the group to let her have any issues/points we would like raised. The Committee suggested the following be noted:

- More fast services in the morning and evening peaks.
- A more frequent service, starting earlier in the morning, to Birmingham International for the airport. This is particularly important to the business community in Milton Keynes and Bletchley. Currently, the earliest train does not get to Birmingham International until 8am which is too late for those wishing to fly.
- A through service to Gatwick without changing. This should also be extended North to Northampton, Birmingham and beyond.

- An East/West rail link from Oxford to Cambridge via Bletchley.
- We welcome the announced improvements to MKC but are disappointed about Wolverton Station.

Louise Green agreed to email the Committee's response.

Action: LG

6. AGM

Louise Green circulated a draft poster announcing the AGM. A few changes were suggested and once we have confirmation of speakers, she will email it to Paul Bryan for display at MKC and Bletchley. **Action: LG/PB**

The committee agreed to use a similar agenda to last year which Louise Green will prepare. **Action: LG**

The minutes of the last AGM should be made available. Louise Green will bring copies to the AGM. **Action: LG**

7. Date of Next Meeting

AGM – Saturday 28 October 2006 at 10.00am
Tuesday 7 November at 19.30